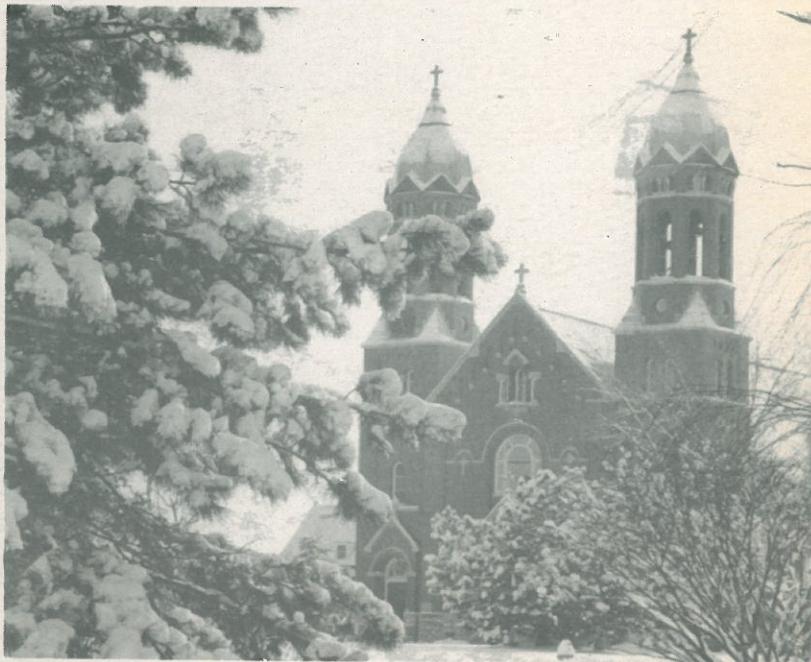


Spring 1984

XLIV



Measure
'84

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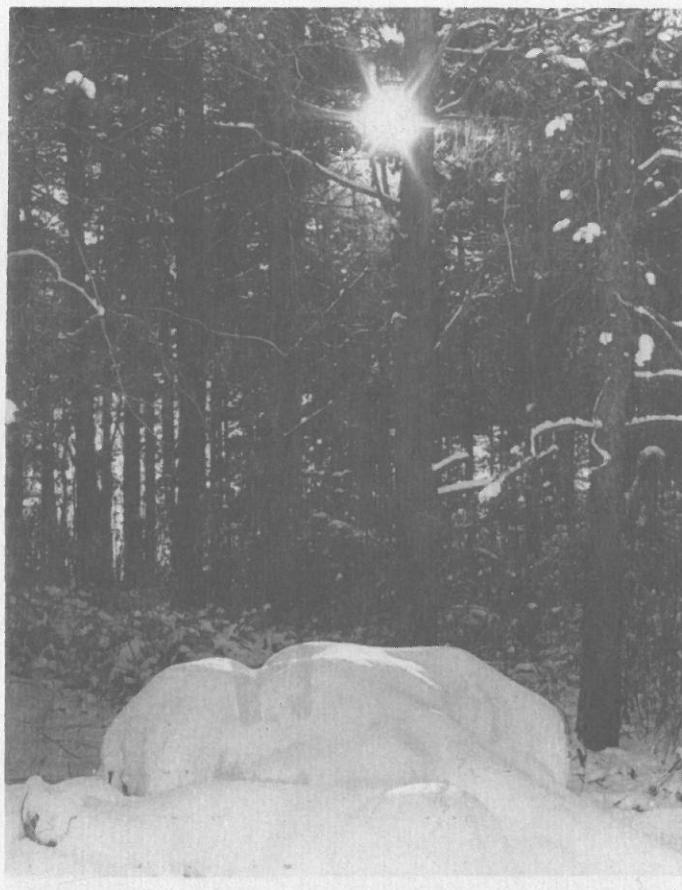
Volume XLIV
Spring, 1984

Hope

Green were her eyes in the gray of November;
Reddening leaves fluttered freely to earth.
Ebon her hair then as darker December
Looked towards the new year's miraculous birth.

Then we enjoyed our youth dreaming of spring nights,
Hoping that green trees would come back again.
Black branches never prevented dove wing lights
Breaking dusk's darkness in promising rain.

T.H.



I Believe Creed

What do I believe in? At first, I had to give this a lot of thought. There are not a lot of things I believe in.

Most of all, I believe in myself. I believe in what I feel is good for me. I believe that I am a princess and someone forgot to make the formal announcement at the time of my birth, May 15, 1962. I believe in true, real feelings. I believe that good things come to those who wait. I believe in accomplishing all my goals, and I always attain what I want.

I Believe In . . .

- ... Having my own mind and freedom of speech.
- ... Growing independent from my parents and living my life to the fullest.
- Yes, I do believe in God, the Father.

I Believe . . .

- ... My father loves me and is proud of me — but has a hard time showing or expressing it.
- ... That one day my mother will win the Illinois State Lottery and won't have to work anymore.
- ... In nonviolence.
- ... In the job opportunities waiting for the graduates of 1984. *You've got to want it!!*
- ... In loyalty among friends being vitally important.
- ... In being a good lover — only if the feeling is right.
- ... In sparing no expense to keep myself happy.
- ... Mother/Father knows best.
- ... Charlie's Angels will live again.
- ... *Dynasty, Dallas, and Falcon Crest* are great night time soap operas because they make me laugh and dream right along with them.
- Yes, I do believe in God, the Father.

I Believe . . .

- ... In open lines of communications. Without communication, we, as individuals, would not be able to communicate with each other. To be effective communicators, *we must be good listeners!*
- ... In order to have a good friend, you have to be a good friend.
- ... You don't have to be a product of your environment.

Yes, I do believe in the Catholic Faith.

I Believe . . .

- ... That Saint Joseph's College has helped me broaden my horizons, my outlook on life, and my opinions on family.
- ... That without my family, my life would not have any meaning.
- ... That laughing is good for the soul. I would rather die laughing than die from hurt and pain.
- ... In loving and respecting my grandparents.
- ... In trust and understanding.

Most of all, I believe in being an outstanding individual. I, Princess, enjoy being who I am and what I came to be. I believe I was born with a communication "gift" to be able to speak with an open heart to people. When Princess speaks — everybody listens!

I Believe . . .

- ... *That I will live forever!*

Lisa Fultz

*The Kingdom of Heaven
Is Like
a Pair of Sneakers*

The kingdom of heaven is like a pair of sneakers which quietly and comfortably fit to one's steps along his pathway, as the softness of their soles cushions his tread even upon the worst of dirt. Activity-filled is their daily life. They support the most productive, creative, rewarding joys of the simplest kind. From within these holders of life, laughter can be heard and challenges taken, always conquerable. Each pair is designed differently for each person, whether it be in the size, shape, or color, to attend to people's different needs. The more one wears them, the more closely the shoes conform to his features.

Unfortunately, sneakers are usually worn only until their newness fades. The security they provide is taken for granted, and the shoes are rejected. The once devout occupant, shallowly devout, comes to realize that when days are good, sunny and bright, shoes are not needed. (Only on the bad days, rainy and cold, do people feel the shoes are necessary for protection.) This is when he first perceives them, as they lay aside with scuff marks and holes, unattractive and undesirable. The comfort the sneakers had provided is forgotten as he now complains that strings are attached which make them too binding.

So into the closet the sneakers go as the naked feet run away in quest of freedom. Gradually, the feet get dirty and develop calluses and irritating sores. The bare feet underneath the warm sun may have been exciting, full of sensation, but shoeless freedom eventually causes great discomfort. In need of relief, the neglector looks again for his sneakers.

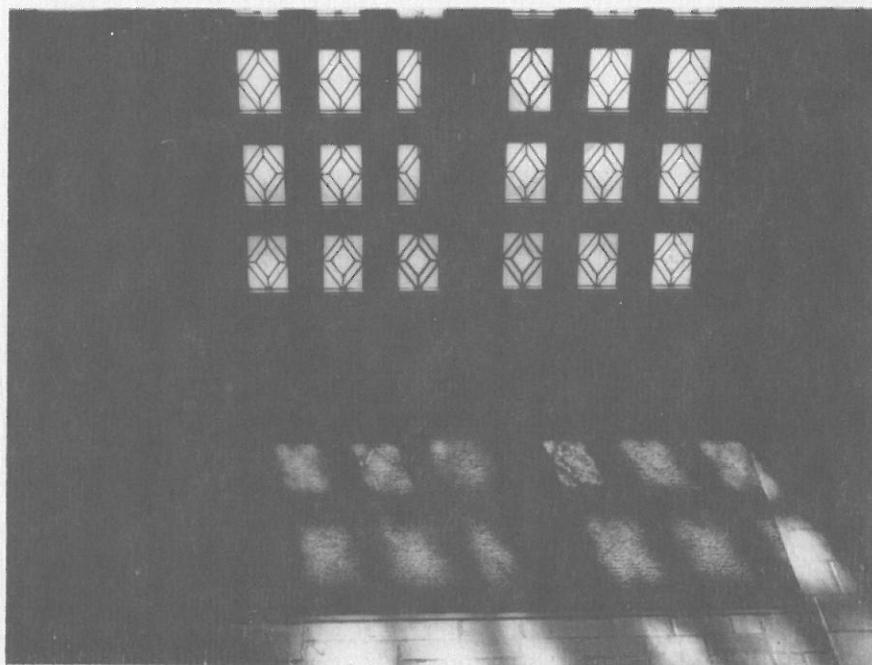
And what a search it turns out to be! Never are the shoes in the same place where they were left, and always an outside force is blamed for their misplacement. Once they are found and tried on again for size, it is discovered that they do not fit quite as comfortably as they used to. They hurt those scarred feet, and the style does not please anymore. The returned occupant's features have changed: he needs a new pair of sneakers. He chooses the next pair from a revised perspective and doesn't soon forget the lesson learned in the case of his own runaway feet.

Saint Nike

Waiting

A worn runner covered the creaky oak of the short aisle,
a straight and narrow path to the uprighteous goal —
a stark podium to be reached only by those of rare piety,
never to be approached by us
who from the path have all taken a wrong turn.
Naked, white walls encased four evenly
spaced windows on each side
which, rigid and straight as sentinels, peered blankly at us.
The fan hummed and perspiration trickled down.
Sticky varnish tugged at my clothes
as I tried to relieve my bones
of the hardness of the bench.
There were five plain lights above my head
and a thick book in my hands.
Now a board creaked,
then a throat cleared,
while we waited . . .
for the stealthy, heavy tread
on the path to the more righteous end.

Laura Bialon



Carousel

The bright lights of the world of fantasy
And gayly painted horses beckon me.
So up onto the platform I do climb,
For choosing of my ride now comes the time.
I take my place upon a fuchsia horse.
As I await beginning of the course,
I wonder not if dragon I will slay,
Or if some long-lost jew'l's will come my way.
For of the future I can clearly see.
This is the day my prince will come to me.

Now as the joyful music starts to flow,
Around and round this cheerful world I go.
My thoughts ride on the gentle ups and downs
Past sparkling streams and bustling little towns.
And as along a peaceful path I ride,
With lovely lush green trees on either side,
I gaze to what ahead of me might be
Where trees converge. The path I cannot see.
And over the small rise that lies ahead,
I see approach a steed of firey red.
Atop the steed a tall, young man does ride.
And soon he turns and pulls up at my side.
Upon my horse he swings so agily.
His warm embrace enfolds me tenderly.
Delivers he that long awaited kiss
Which signifies the best of worlds of bliss.
Around and round this cheerful world we go
While on the joyful music still does flow.
Oh, but this world forever cannot be.
Soon loosens he his gentle hold on me.
As music slows and slows until it's still,
I see him disappear o're farthest hill.

Down from my now-still mount I smoothly slide,
Reflecting on the best part of the ride.
And backward glance I as I walk away,
Well knowing I'll return another day.
While staying in this world would madness be,
To visit now and then aids sanity.

Recent Widow

I set his place for dinner.
It's hard to remember to count out one less plate.
I still expect to see him in the doorway, smiling,
and I want to ask him how his day has been.
His workshoes are still in the corner where he left them.
I just sweep around and leave them undisturbed.
His chair sits by the fire,
his paper lies beside,
the smell of pipe tobacco still lingers in the air.
His watch ticks on the nightstand,
and I've not yet changed the sheets.
Life goes on, they say.
I only wonder when.

Laura Bialon

Kevin's Eyes

If I had not known Kevin's eyes
Perhaps the day would be easier to
Understand,
Gentler to me.
If I hadn't memorized the sound he made
While close to me,
I might have filled my memory with September
Skies
Or October sea,
But as it is, my memory world has little room
For skies,
All the space is taken up remembering
Kevin's eyes.

Brenda Harsha

Dear Mr. President,

I know that you're quite busy with the things that leaders do,
But I wonder if you'd have time to read a thing or two?
My Pa's been out of work now; it's going on six months.
My Ma has cried most every night; my Pa has only once.
Even Betsy Lou, my doll, has shed her share of tears,
And she ain't cried since I put gum in her eyes way last year.
My Pa worked in a factory while my Ma took care of me,
But Pa is home most everyday; he's getting worse you see.
He's startin' to get wrinkles, and his hair is turnin' white.
He looks for work most everyday and walks the floor at night.
He's gettin' really tired; his face looks awful thin.
Ma says that it ain't human, and it darned near is a sin.
All his life he's worked hard, but he ain't got no savings now.
And Ma's afraid that my ole pa is "throwin' in the towel."
Mr. President, please don't tell my Pa I wrote,
But if you get us through this mess, I swear you'll have my vote.
That's if you're in office at least for eight more years.
But as for now, will you please help erase my daddy's fears?
Well, I really got to go now, cause it's time to hit the hay,
But 'fore I go I have just one more thing I'd like to say:
Thank-you for the time you gave to read the note I sent.
I hope you help my Pa and me, that's why you're President.
Betsy Lou is tired, and I think that so am I.
And I could really have a mess if Betsy Lou should cry.
Maybe you could write a note or maybe pass a law,
To help put food on the table for me, my Ma and Pa.

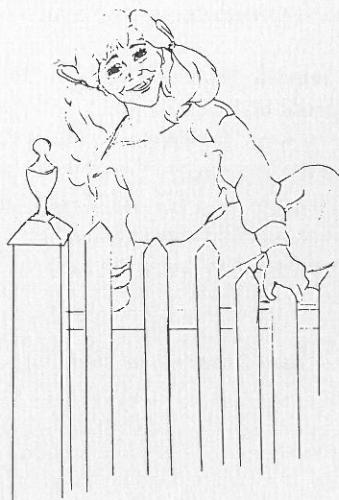
Love,
Me and Betsy Lou

Sue Keller

Doc

A friend of mine once told me
About a little girl,
 Doc,
Who came to her house
A bawling infant,
A foster sister,
 and stayed two years
 (or was it three?)
I really don't remember.
But I remember that as she spoke,
I noticed how her voice softened
 upon the little girl's name,
 Doc,
And that I saw mist in her eyes.
After she told me,
I went home
 and cried
Because I know
How little girls can sneak
 into places
 they don't belong —
 like your heart.

Brenda Harsha



Down-shifting

Wheels spinning,
Engine whirring,
Sunlight flickering on the hood,
Minutes ticking,
Thoughts racing,
Landscape blurring by.
Hurry, hurry,
That I must to an important meeting.
What's that ahead with an orange triangle?
Oh, it's an old Allis-Chalmers tractor and a plow
Putting along at about 20 miles or so an hour.

Down-shifting I draw up behind.
The farmer in his coverall of gray
And bright red farmer's cap
Anxiously looks back and forth
Trying to see a clearing for waving me around,
But traffic, hills and curves have their way.
I think, "Don't worry so.
I was raised a farmer's daughter."
That old engine grittily purring,
The oily puffs rising from the stack,
Even the farmer's gray and grizzly morning beard
And sloping shoulders
Draw me back to something long ago.

I allow my mind to wander
To the crispness of a morning
On the way to work the field
And feel the joy of sowing
And the tenacity of long but well-loved labor.
Stick-to-it-tiveness my father called it.
That's what ya need to work the land,
Row by row,
Day by day,
At much less than 20 miles an hour.

As I follow, the landscape
Turns from blur to fields
Of fresh-turned earth and lush green winter wheat.
And at the roadside spring some early wild flowers.
And sunlight once flashing so annoyingly
Now brightens and warms caressingly.
I even catch sight of a lively hare
bobbing along the fence-row.

Then suddenly a restless soul
In a red Jaguar pulls up behind
And issues a blast of horn.
The farmer much more nervous now
Finds a pulling-off place
And I slowly swing around.
The one who couldn't wait
Flashes passed, glad to get back
to the speed of life.
I, too, reluctantly resume the pace.
This means, of course, that I'll be late
For my important meeting,
But so what.

Laura Bialon

Priming

Everything with a little age on it
needs priming.
The older it gets
the more priming it needs.
And sometimes even then
it doesn't work.

Laura Bialon

Think

Sometimes . . . I'll lie here
Thinking . . .
About a lot of things,
Feeling sorry for something I said or did,
Feeling depressed . . . about me.
Why do I feel the way I do,
Wanting to cry . . . without having a reason why?
Or . . .
Sometimes . . . I'll lie here, thinking . . .
About school . . .
All my friends . . .
How much I really love it all . . .
Growing up . . .
It can be hard . . .
You just need time . . .
To think.

Brenda Harsha

The Flower

A petal falls slowly to the ground, and then
Another one.
He loves me. He loves me not.
Two more petals float softly to the ground.
He loves me. He loves me not.
Still, two more petals flutter gently to the earth.
He loves me. He loves me not.
I knew it in my mind all the time.
I feared the answer from the start.

Brenda Harsha



The Falls (Weekend at the F.W.C.A.)

They're behind the chapel,
About 15 telephone poles or so . . .
Nothing special, not very high or spectacular.
A lot like me I guess.
I tumble and crash headlong
Over the rockshelves too blind and dumb
To know better.
I am all broken, and swirl about lazily
in the pool, resting before
I must flow on
Gurgling down the gorge.
I slip quietly over the smooth ones,
And whisper among the sand and dead leaves.
I roar and grind over the rough new ones,
Paining them perfect, and then bettering them still.
Now I saunter in eddies and then
Rush ahead blindly injuring both parties —
Yet the pain is good; the bad blood washes
Free, leaving me strong in my pale simplicity.
At times I am held back, but nothing can hold me
Long. I find a way around. Sometimes
The way is unhindered, and
I flow free and easy.
Small, silent, ever without notice,
Still, how gentle and deep I cut,
Seeping into fissures and low places,
Filling them and then moving on.
I hear, see, feel everything yet
Know nothing and search on
For that great merge moment,
My own little Cairo, Illinois, I won't miss it.
Then all that I ever was — a trickle on hard
Granite, a thousand foot gorge — and all that I
Ever will be, all that I am, always moving
Always in one place, will cry out with joy,
Will scream and holler, and be fulfilled.

Cream-filled Eyes

I asked them
A stupid question
About life,
And I was hit
With a pie
In the face,
For no one had
The answer.
I seem to
Spend
Most
Of my time
Viewing the world
Through
Cream-filled
Eyes.

Brenda Harsha



Prisoner

A young colt, full of spirit,
Runs wild and free.
While I, bound by standards and customs,
Lie here . . . prisoner to my own beliefs.

Brenda Harsha

Sensitivity

I trace your face on the tablecloth
With the handle of my knife
As the artist's brush
Would flirt with the canvas.
Aimlessly, almost dejectedly,
As the clouds change patterns,
So your face becomes vaguer,
Losing all continuity and meaning.
As the friendly lake rolls
And erases the imprint of our names
Etched there on the dock,
So my heart washes over and leaves you
As only a brown manikin
That I will remember and love,
Not for what it is —
But for what it was.

Brenda Harsha



Monday Poem Written on Tuesday

I look out on Monday to see
The tree by the parking lot
Becoming more radiant
By the moment.
Ahead of its time
And out of place,
It beckons the fall.
Such golden grandeur
Against olive drab
Goes against the grain.
The creator,
Leaving splinters of himself,
Fights the current just to launch
A pet project,
And why?
Nothing more than: I yam what I yam,
And that's all I yam.
And then?
When the last secret is divulged,
The last bit of self surrendered,
When the last leaf,
All brown and wrinkly,
Can hold on no longer,
Then?
Nothing,
Just the cold seeds
Of new colors, ideas,
Arrangements,
Or just newness itself
And warm black earth to grow
In. What a way to go!

My St. Joe Senior Creed

I, Allison C. Shortt, as a St. Joe Senior, believe the following:

A duty I have to myself and to others.
To share what I have with my sisters and brothers.

The talking and list'ning I do with my peers
Will make us good friends who will last through the years.

My Profs, fellow students and I must collab'rate.
And on differing opinions, we all must elab'rate,

Till at a better understanding we arrive
To ask more questions, to keep up the drive.

The outside activ'ties are ritual to all,
And teamwork in life will prevent many falls.

All prej'dice and gossip we must dissipate
As a just and a free world we try to create.

We are all equal, our beings have worth,
We must help the troubled ones — give them rebirth.

We are persons, not things, with body and soul;
These years are crucial as we become whole.

My learning I'll integrate into my being;
It will color the world which I'll lifelong be seeing.

Material goods please, but they soon may be gone.
And I'll need a large core of good friends to lean on.

Thus I must share my love and my time,
To hoard them myself would be a great crime.

True happiness reigns when at four years end,
I'll look back at many and call each my dear friend.

I must use what I learn to help shape future years
Into much better times full of laughter and cheers.

My task: to ban poverty, hatred, and war
And to establish world peace, so there's hunger no more.

Ah, my years as a Puma draw fast to a close,
But I'm happy and proud of the school that I chose.

I believe in my schooling and relations enjoyed;
I believe in my life and the tactics employed.

St. Joe has been guide on my journey towards God;
I believe in my destiny — onward I trod.

Mary Huffstetter

The Old Oak Tree In The Church Yard

Where a tree once shaded
many a catholic head,
now a tree is dead.
And probably, too, many a head it shaded.

Winters, Springs, Summers, Falls
children have played 'round it,
quite a pleasure many have found it.
Dead now, no use. Buzz saw, it falls.

Nichole Steininger

To Have to Say Good Bye

Though I know all rivers flow
unto a final end,
that the closing light of day
submits as night descends,
and that a little sparrow rests
after hours in the sky,
I never thought the day would come
when we would have to say good-bye.

The rowdy, fun, mischievous times,
a snowy midnight walk,
a casual drink of pink champagne,
a warm, understanding talk,
a caring shoulder to lean on
when times just seemed too rough,
the parties and staying up all night
when we hadn't studied enough,

I'll cherish all these memories,
the laughter and the fun,
the quiet times and special things
that you and I have done.
I promise to keep these treasures
deep within my heart,
especially all the special times
in which you played a part.

Remember, though, the river
flows out into the sea,
that the light that slipped into the night
will soon a new day be,
and that the little sparrow
can fly because it's free.
But, most of all, remember
how much you mean to me.

Daniel L. Lengerich II

Sitting at Wrigley Field on the Last Day of the Baseball Season

Over my head, I see birds flying south,
Escaping the cold
Flying high like enormous enemy aircraft.
Looking down from the upper deck, I see
Baseball players performing their jobs
As if an end is near.
To my left,
Looking beyond left field bleachers,
Waveland Avenue is deserted.
No kids waiting for that big catch.
I stand up and stretch, as it's the 7th.
A few people join Harry in singing.
I can't wait to graduate!

Kathy Gilbert



Getting in Late

I picked up the brassier, examined it for a moment, and then tossed it aside. I sat down where it had been at the foot of the bed. I had come into Brenda's room because Gary and John were asleep in mine, and Jean was in bed also. That left me with Brenda's room which was just as well since it had the best lighting of all three of the upstairs rooms. Brenda had gone out and wouldn't be back for a few hours.

It was about midnight and the entire house was quiet. I looked down at the bright red covered paperback I was holding, *The Coming of the Horseclans*. It looked pretty wild. One of my friends had given it to me, and I had been wanting to read it for a long time. I hadn't planned on starting this late, but the silage unloader had broken, and the cows had gotten out, and I had gotten in late. Plus, I had sat around a while, watched some television, and taken a shower since then. So now I was starting at midnight.

The reading was slow at first but picked up quite a bit as the action did the same. I was moving right along in the book when I think I must have dozed off for no apparent reason for my head nodded back and struck a hard, smooth surface. I turned around to see that the surface which my head had struck was the shinplate armourpiece of my guard, Lutros. Lutros was quite young and a bit insecure in his new position. He had recently replaced Kahlan, a seasoned, old soldier who fell in the battle for the Trade Gap, scarcely less than a week ago; it seemed like a month.

"Please forgive me, my Lord Milo, for being so clumsy," stammered the young guard.

"You must learn to be more careful around your War-Chief, soldier," I scolded him, knowing full well that he was in no way at fault. I was just playing my role as I had been for the last three and a half months since my appointment as War-Chief of the Horseclans.

The orange-red embers burned bright and warm in the night, gently illuminating the dark, young face of Mara, who was crouched down beside me. She had been as good a companion as a man could dream of in the past few months. Starting out as a slave, she had proven her valor and skill as a fighter by my side. And when given her freedom, she had chosen to stay on as protector and companion.

I gave the order to put out the fire and move out, and we were underway within minutes. The hour's rest had been too brief, but it was all that could be afforded in light of our being pursued.

We rode on for a full hour, moving deeper and deeper into the Eastern Forest. Then suddenly, seemingly without reason, Steeltooth stopped and snorted. Seeing his ears prick up, I immediately looked around to see what the big horse was sensing. Then, before I could give warning, they were upon us; huge, dark, mutant, forms, armed with every sort of weapon imaginable, sprung out in ambush. They were obviously after our loot. I drove my saber half way through the side of my first attacker's neck and dropped him twitching to the dirt. Our foes were trying to overpower us with brute strength rather than best us by swordsmanship and skill. A large mutant lunged at me with broadsword; but Steeltooth lightly dodged, and I buried my saber in his helmet and skull below. Lutros, to my left, held off his foes' initial attack, but then out of the corner of my eye, I saw him knocked from his horse with a lance. A moment later, I heard his deathcry as a mutant drove a short dagger deep into his chest. Instantly, I wheeled Steeltooth about and sliced my guard's murderer's chest open, dropping him in his tracks. I fought side by side with Mara for some time, our horses rearing and wheeling around and around, but then somehow we became separated. The battle raged on, and although the mutants were dropping their share of clansman, our superior skill was slowly driving our attackers back into the darkness beyond from whence they came.

Mara's scream chilled me to the bone. I realized the seriousness of the situation at once and fought all the harder. Subduing my nearest foes, I wheeled about and raced in the direction of the scream. The mutants were all but routed.

Then I saw her, her body torn and broken, sprawled in the dirt, surrounded by mutant bodies twisted in death. I dismounted and bent over her. I felt a wide, empty space yawning within me and could not bear to look. I picked up the bloodied brassier, examined it for a moment, and then tossed it aside. I stamped out of the room, was down the steps in four bounds and out the door into the still, silent night. I brooded over to my brother's Mustang parked near the gas drum and leaned against it, my aching back muscles tightening as they touched the stone cold metal. And then in one deft motion, I spun around and slammed my hand hard on the hood. Almost instantly the dog started barking. I stood for a moment, bent over with my hands on the car, glaring into the blackness, and then turned and leaned back again. With legs and arms crossed, I bitterly stared skyward. She had been the only thing in this world that had meant anything to me; she was all I had. I wanted to rip and tear and crush the life out of her murderers, but . . . I stared at the moon and the stars for a long time and then walked slowly back to the house. I felt the cool breeze on my wet face as I covered the short distance. Once inside I went into the bathroom and scrubbed the sweaty grime and congealed blood from my arms and face, after which I climbed the stairs to go to bed, all the while plotting vengeance.

B. C.
Winner of Best of Student Prose

Impressions

Rose petal, day-moon,
Dew stars gleam in your light . . .

Symphonic gardenia,
Silk-sweet fragrance —
Blinding me, memory flower,
Not an experience
Limited to now.
Eternal ether murmuring . . .

Forsythia yellow,
Waving in whispers at unborn tulips
Under ephemeral magnolia's shade . . .

The blue-white sky is not
Above — It is the space
Between your golden perfumed nectar-cups

(Then someone closed the window)

Though seeing still, part of it I am
No more

T.H.



Sheila White
Winner of Best of Line Drawings

The Spook House Scare

Graduating from college is like an adventure through a spook house. Walking continuously back and forth in front of the spook house, I finally decided to enter. I paid for the ticket and stood at the door of the unexpected. As I stepped into the dark and dreary hallway, my pulse raced. My adventure had begun. The first room I entered was lined with nothing but doors. A successful adventure, I knew, would depend on which door I opened. I opened door #3, and a long, dimly lighted passageway awaited me. Before I knew it, I, trembling body and all, had encountered a room with little holes emitting light onto the walls. I felt like thousands of people were staring right through me. Stumbling out of that dreadful room, I had a very eerie feeling. The hallway was not much of a comfort, though. The lights gave everything, including myself, a distorted look. Not feeling safe, I began to run, but it seemed like I was not getting anywhere. The light at the end of the hall gave me strength and hope to keep moving. The end was all I could think about. Much to my dismay, it was only a balcony of the house, but it did give me the chance to see the real world again. As much as I hated to, I turned away so I could search for the exit. The next room was quite frightening. There were a casket and an old, scary man that popped up and laughed at me, warning signs, cobwebs and spiders, and a graveyard behind. This room was filled with death, and I could not wait to get out. Outside of that room, I stopped to catch my breath. When I looked up, I saw an exit sign. I was never so happy in all my life! However, when I reached the sign, there were three paths to take. Each one had a hand pointing to an exit. I had to make another choice. I walked very cautiously down the hall, anticipating the worst. Nothing happened, though, and before I knew it, I was standing at the door. I pushed open the door, and there it was — the same old world. I had made it!

Stephanie Lindahl

Both Snow & Rain

Be careful !
The implausible itch, the smile,
The hint of a beckon:
All just reasons.

Let's declare ourselves saints and see what happens

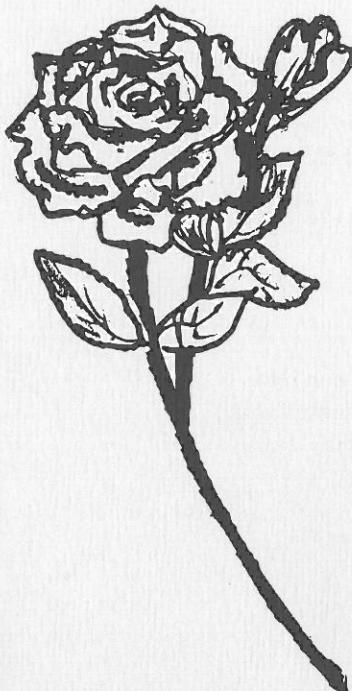
And

1. I will hide a pea under your bed
2. I will leave a box of crackers on your nightstand

And

Then when you have gone for a ride
I will steal in to stare at the
lines your face left in the pillow
and long to be
in the other room.

Brian Capouch



To Write

To write
Is to grasp a moment,
A mood,
A memory,
A moment that is
And will always have been.
To write
Is to bring it to light so that
I may feel it again
And hold it in my hands.

Brenda Harsha

Of Peace, Serenity, and God in Kentucky Hills

Something stirs deep within me
As I gaze from this unnatural height.
There is a longing deep within my soul
To be free to soar among the smoky,
Green becoming slopes and to cry out my me
As the whippoorwill proclaims it's sad, sad prophesy.
I think I must feel as does the
Surrounding wood — dead to eyes, yet
Known to have silent life within
About to burst forth in clamorous colors.

But there is a coldness in these stone
Upon stone walls — peopled by silent, undistracted
Stone figures. They stand and bow as statues,
Proclaiming haunting echoes which again
Summon and move something in the heart of me,
And this time I recognize. Not new
But never before fully understood.

One greatest found himself in similar
Surroundings long ago,
Understood, and was fulfilled.
(Is it fulfillment that I seek?)
In all this hallowed, silent sacredness,
He is.
I feel He must come to rest on weekends to
A place where all order and quietude
Is not choked out by a thousand million
Distractions and false embellishments.

The statutes — almost without movement
And ever without notice —
Change the world in silent, small sorts of ways
With their black and white lives.
A contradiction in their say will not
Let me stay — but I encountered, ran into
(By accident, I'm sure — He always makes
Things look accidental,) and experienced
Not all (never all) but a part, a facet
Of Him today — a strong basis,
A foundation which I can come back to. I
Don't know what He says yet,
But at least I know He's speaking.

Love

Soft butterfly wings
floating on the wind,
Sailing through the clouds
like a fluff of cotton,
Touching gently to the ground
like a snowflake
And hounding off again
on the wind
Like a dandelion
that has gone to seed,
Or a single feather
after a pillow-fight —
I am in love,
and my spirit soars to heights
that my body cannot reach.

Brenda Harsha



Mentor

Sometimes he is the ice melting from the roof
giving of himself drop by drop
To me, the dry, thirsty earth below,
Flowing more freely, quickly
As he warms,
Forming a hollow in my mind
For filling with ideas,
Not at all like the pouring rain
Which only pelts then sinks away.

Sometimes he is the consistent moon
Drawing forth my tides,
Helping me to know full
And empty and full again,
Smiling down with silver light,
Reflecting the precious beams
From a source I cannot see,
Touching sparkle to my waves.

Sometimes he is the waterfall
Crashing down around my head,
Soaking me with what he knows,
So cold and clear, quick, fresh, alive,
Rushing over me, drawing forth my power
To meet his, the joy, vivacity in me
To match his own.

Sometimes he is the morning mist,
A vision which draws me from my quiet room,
Beckons me to smell the fresh of day,
There, until I reach for him or time carries him away,
Leaving only his dew upon my grass.

Sometimes he is the gentle evening rain
Awakening the sleeping dove within my heart,
Not giving wings, but whispering with wisdom of forthcoming flight
So, when he has passed, my heart, yet, may feast and soar.

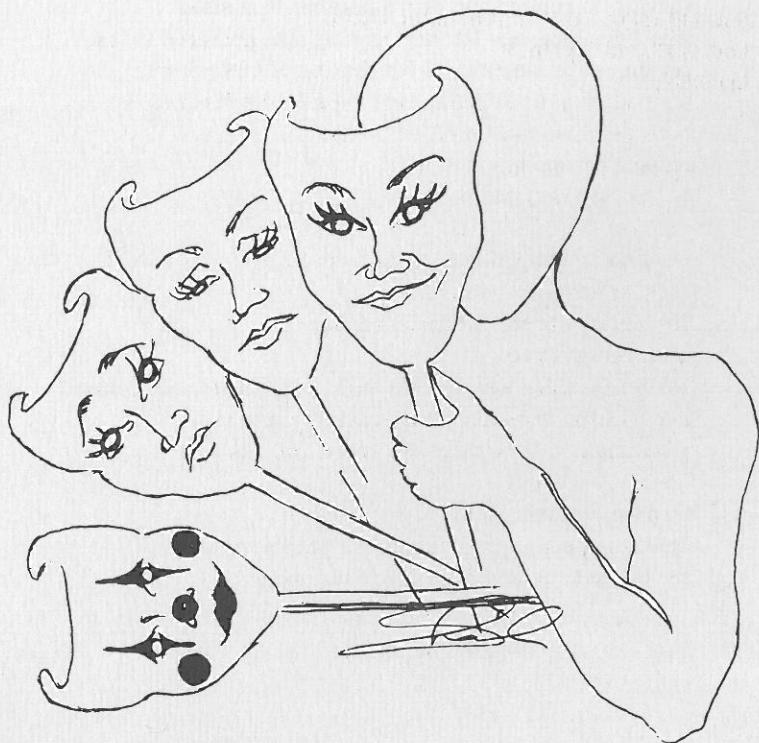
Always he is the current of my stream,
Guiding, sending me along,
Softly pulling or forcefully compelling,
Ever causing the surging in my soul,
The need to search beyond the farthest bend.

"Masquerade"

A mask to hide my happiness,
One to hide my sorrow,
A mask to cover up the past,
One more to veil tomorrow,

I walk through life without a face,
A puppet full of lies,
Intent upon concealing
My heart from prying eyes.
How sad that when a life is played,
It's no more than a masquerade.

Brenda Harsha



Life Laid Waste

Long I've waited through the winter cold and bleak
for snow to clear and birds to sing again,
so I may find the wood awakening anew
and watch the oriole rebuild her nest
or catch glimpse of a soft puff
of rabbit fur playing hide and seek.

But here in this desolate field I stand
surrounded by huge heaps of waste and death.
Beneath my feet are countless twigs and roots
which tell of the great lives which here once grew.
Why ever took he a bulldozer to this wood?

For once the trees stood close and loosely interwined,
broadly leaved, graceful, richly green,
rooted here long before me or him,
serving to remind me of my kinship to a sister
who here long ago for her cooking fire gathered twigs,
serving as a playground for that band of squirrels,
year after year keeping their nest in the crooked oak,
here as home and food for many,
helping life go on.
It was my classroom and my haven.

Now no longer will the ferns push forth
their banners to unfurl.
No longer will the white-tailed deer
seek refuge here.
No longer will I surprise an early-rising owl here at dusk,
nor will the bobwhite echo faithfully my call.
What right had he to make an end of this wood?

Had he not enough to plow?
Enough space to set his captive plants in rows,
for doesn't untilled land bring profit, too?

I think I would not feel so sad
if it had been some farmer
with a horse and ax,
for he would not have wished
to clear the world,
only his little space.
But this one tallies numbers behind a desk.
He doesn't touch or see or feel
the life he lays to waste.

They're lighting the funeral fires now.
I'll mourn as I watch into the night
for all that was and would have been,
and because my children's children will never
embrace or be embraced by this wood.

Laura Bialon



The Pot of Gold at the End of the Rainbow

Overlooking a little village at the bottom of a lush, green valley was a tall, rugged mountain upon which an old, wise man lived in a rickety hut. With this old man lived a young sixteen-year-old boy whose parents hoped would become wiser about life from associating with Mackeneze, as the old man was called. Now Oliver, the young boy, already thought he knew everything and was very hard to live with. So one day Mackeneze decided to tell Oliver a story about the village below as it had been many years before. Mackeneze, being a good judge of character, knew this story would pertain to Oliver. They both sat down overlooking the village just as the sun was beginning to set.

"Do you, who think you already know all, Oliver, know the myth that says a pot of gold lies at the end of every rainbow?" asked Mackeneze.

"Yes, old, wise one, even the smallest child knows as much," answered Oliver sarcastically.

"Well, then being so wise, you should know what happened in the village below some fifty years ago," countered Mackeneze.

With the red color of shame creeping up his face, Oliver admitted he knew nothing of the sort.

"So I thought," said Mackeneze, "but before I tell you, may I ask what it is you think is most important to obtain in life?"

"That is easy. A job in which to obtain enough money to buy all one could dream of would be wonderful. I would say that just having money would be nice. Gold and silver are things most anyone would want," replied Oliver confidently.

"And how would you go about getting this wealth if you could not find a job?" queried Mackeneze.

"Any way I could, of course. It is the most important thing," answered Oliver.

"At the cost of hurting others?"

"Yes, if they stand in my way."

"Just as I thought," said Mackeneze. "Now I will tell you the story."

"Fifty years ago after a big rain, the most exquisite rainbow appeared. There was a young man much like you who casually remarked that he would like to find the gold at the end of the rainbow and become rich. People laughed at him, telling him that this was only a myth and that being a young man he should find a job so that he could buy all the good things in life. The young man succumbed to the villagers' advice and found a job. He became so rich that he could buy anything his heart desired except the friendship of the other villagers for they had come to hate him. This young boy had stopped at nothing to become rich, even when it had meant hurting others. The villagers regretted ever having told him to work to become rich. The young man eventually became older as we all must, but he was not happy. His mighty mansion blocked out the sun, and he had expanded his buildings so much, he could not even have a garden. He had built roofs over all the paths so he would never be caught in the rain. Eventually, he admitted to himself that he missed the rain, but even more he missed the rainbow. He remembered the many years before when he had seen that exquisite rainbow and

sighed because now he did not even have that to enjoy. He had no friends and no happiness. 'If only to see a rainbow again, I would give this all up,' he would say to himself. Finally, he did give all his expansive estate away and became a common villager."

At this point Oliver interrupted with shocked disbelief that anyone could be so stupid.

"Well, let me ask you this," said Mackeneze. "Do you consider your father wealthy?"

"Of course not," said Oliver. "Would I be here if we were rich?"

"Ah, then let me ask you this," said Mackeneze. "Is your father happy?"

"Why, yes, he says he is anyway," said Oliver hesitantly. "But, then he says what we have is everything anyone could want; a nice family, a nice place to live, and good friends. He even thinks it is an honor to see the sky. I think he is crazy. He is satisfied with anything."

"Does your father consider himself wealthy?"

"Yes, the old fool says he is the richest man in the world," Oliver replied scornfully.

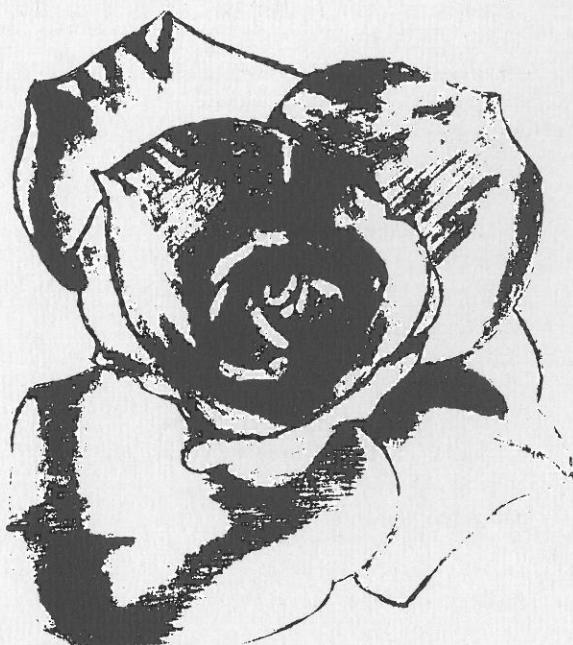
"My dear Oliver, you still do not see, do you? The man I was speaking about is your father. You are here because he realized you had the same notions he once had, and he wanted to spare you from the pain he encountered."

Oliver was dumfounded!

"But, but, I still do not see!" said the puzzled Oliver.

"My boy," said Mackeneze, "wealth does not lie in the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow but in the rainbow itself."

M. K.



“I Wish”

I wish
 I could capture
A rainbow
 And conceal it
In my soul
 For a time when
Sunshine is rare
 And I’m in need of
A sparkling moment to
 Brighten the empty loneliness of
A day without
 Love and laughter.

Brenda Harsha

“Sometimes”

Sometimes I think I hear you,
But it’s only the wind.
An awesome chasm separates us
Though sometimes our spirits ride
Together
Over free and forever silent plains.
There will be no echoes to remind me that
You have gone;
You left no warning.
You were snatched into the grips
Of bleak nothingness —
Just last night I saw you
Riding over the hills in your sun-glistening
Chariot and thought I heard you,
Thought I felt you there with me.
But it was only the wind . . .
Only the wind.

Brenda Harsha

“Peace”

Dark skies,
Never have I seen your stars so bright.
Sitting under your canopy,
Breathing in the scent of a
Sleeping forest,
I am touched by this simple beauty.
And as I hear the laughter of my friends
And remember their tears,
I feel at peace.
How will this change me?
What price shall I pay for my serenity?

Brenda Harsha



The Dentist's Appointment

Here I sit once more in this uncomfortably quiet waiting room. The monotonous flip, flip, flipping of magazine pages is the only sound that penetrates the impending silence. Every now and again I can hear a drill start up down the corridor. Will somebody say something! Let's have a little music or something! Why doesn't that little baby start babbling or bawling?

I need something to take my mind off of what very soon awaits me. I know that the petite nurse's white figure will suddenly appear from nowhere. And she'll question in her petite, white voice: "Nichole Steininger?"

I can't spring for the door in front of all the silent, watching, magazine-eyed people. Ah, I can, however, look around bewildered as if I, too, am waiting for Nichole Steininger to get up and follow the nurse. Yes, yes, I can just sit here while the delicate little thing half calls, half whispers out again. . . . "Nichole Steininger?"

NICHOLE STEININGER? Oh my God, there she is! What, what am I doing? I'm numbly following her down the hallway — mutely, like a cow off to slaughter.

Would I like to have a seat right here, she's saying ever so sweetly as she makes a feather light gesture with her hand, indicating the dentist's chair. Oh, how I'd love to floor her and say, "Why no, I would not like to sit there. Perhaps you have another chair in a different colored room. What's that you say, dear? None available . . . it's just not possible? Well then, I guess I'll come back another day."

Too late. I'm already being adjusted into the head rest and having a bib clipped around me as if I were a baby. And now the part these disinfectant, white lillies must love most; — laying out the dental tools. The shiny steel clatters out a little laugh. The curved needle picks, the swivel-head mirror, the tiny scrapers, the drill heads are all laid out. The drill heads — have you no mercy?! She pushes them in front of me, the snow hearted creature.

I hear the familiar, sporadic humming approaching. "And how are we today?" he belows and then tilts his greying head and peers over his spectacles. "How are 'we'?" Are you talking to Nurse Snow Blossom also?

"Fine," I lie. I don't know about her.

"Good, good," he sings, "and how is school? Open wide."

Now which does he want me to do, answer the question or open wide? A breathless "good" is all I can squeak out.

"Fine, fine," he, interested I'm sure, comments back.

My, my what an array of exciting and descriptive adjectives we've exchanged here. Good and fine; we're really getting pretty deep aren't we?

And now the hum again. It's a hidious, choppy little tune I've been hearing for about thirteen years now. I'm sure he couldn't even name it if I cared to ask him what it is. I'm also quite positive it's not a real song, just a hum — his hum. Possibly, he thinks it's a calming technique for his patients. He probably thinks it's working because I'm closing my eyes. This, my dear Doctor, is because of two reasons: one, so I can't see what dastardly instrument you're picking up; and two, so I won't have to see the vibration of your nosehairs when you hum.

Oh no! The humming has stopped. This means he's going to inform me of some immediate discomfort I'll soon be experiencing. "Okay, dear, we're going to give you the novocain shot now. There will be a little pinch."

Little pinch my foot! Who do you think you're fooling? This isn't exactly my first time at a dentist's office you know.

"Whoops! I'm having a hard time finding the nerve," he says. I hope that wasn't a trace of a chuckle I heard.

Oh-----My-----gosh!!!! I think I'm going to die if he continues to wiggle that needle around one more second. By the way, Doc, I hope you don't mind the fingernail imprints in your armrests.

"We'll just let that set up for five minutes."

Right, five minutes he says. He'll leave me alone with the slurping and hissing of the saliva sucker that's digging a hole under my tongue while he goes out for lunch at a nearby cafe."

Ah, finally back, I see. You should have left me a copy of *War and Peace*. I could have done a little reading while you were out. What a relief to have the eight pounds of obstruction removed from my mouth. It'll take the whole day for it to go back to its original shape. It feels like I'm carrying a huge lump or growth on my cheek for everyone in the waiting room to gawk at.

With a hiss the hydraulic chair eases me down. Miss Surah white nurse stands waiting, giving me a taunting little grin as she holds out my appointment reminder card. In her tiny voice she sweetly says, "Here ya go. See you in six months and keep on flossing."

What an inspirational send off! What can I say — Thanks, same to you; or don't worry, I won't let you down?

I simply nod my half numb face and quickly make for the door.

Nichole Steininger

Old Man in the Park

He sits feeding pigeons all day long until night falls.
I see him every day. Children scamper along side of him,
playing tag games, laughing, making him laugh.

The leaves drift by me, falling slowly downward from
the trees as I sit alone and content. Children play along
side the park bench with jackets on — there's a little breeze.

Old man, don't you have a home? Old man, isn't
there someone waiting there for you? Is there
no one for you?

I used to play in the park on Saturdays, went to ballgames
on Sundays with my dad. Mister Time came one day and
took my father away from me — leaving me alone.

Old man on the park bench sits there feeding pigeons,
telling stories to children who want to hear them.
Who wants to hear them?

He never seems to be lonely; people never give him trouble.
They don't bother to bother him. He's their link to an
age almost gone — soon to leave; he's a window to a world
long passed — a time in the past that they never knew.

Old man, will you be all right? How long will you be alone?
I've got to go now, okay? Maybe I'll see you again.
Will I see you again?

The sky begins to fade. A tear runs down a little boy's
cheek as he picks himself up off the ground, wiping
his skinned knee. The old man leaves.

And leaves fall around me as I walk along littered streets.
Time doesn't stop; the world keeps spinning 'round. It's
an old saying, but it's an old world — and it's dying.
And the old man won't be feeding pigeons in the park anymore.

Philip Coleman



"The Old Widow of Weaver's End"

Around late October, the smell of burning firewood, the colors of the fallen leaves, and the taste of apple cider bring back memories, especially of Aunt Ginny. Every Halloween, Aunt Ginny tells us about the old Widow Harttman of Weaver's End. In her day, it made a mighty scary tale for a campfire get-together. Yet even now, I still shiver every time I hear the squirrels scuttling in the Harttman well.

This part of Illinois is famous for its groves of delicious red apples. No apples in the country can compare to those of Weaver's End. And old Mrs. Harttman, well, she owned the choicest, most fruitful trees in the whole county. Even when an early chill frost damaged the other farmers' harvests, Widow Harttman would turn out her best bushels of apples ever. She darn near talked those trees into bearing fruit.

As in every small town, there were the village rascals. The twelve-year-old Hinton boy, Tommy, and his companions, Johnnie and Ted, always had a knack for raising a ruckus. They weren't bad youngsters; they only had an eye for trouble. Heaven knows what kind of bottomless pits those boys had for stomachs. Mrs. Harttman's red, ripened apples must have tempted them much like Eve did Adam.

On a chilly October evening, the three of them climbed over Mrs. Harttman's fence and into the yard. In one corner stood a wooden shed in which Widow Harttman stored her apples. Stealthily, the trio entered the shed and began stuffing apples into pockets, sleeves, and stocking hats. A hoot owl screeched, somewhere nearby, and Johnnie screamed. No doubt it was Johnnie's yell that brought Mrs. Harttman outside that fateful eve.

The boys instinctively ran out to the yard, but they noticed the old woman's figure in the doorway of the house. The nearest hiding place was the well, and they took advantage of it.

Mrs. Harttman peered cautiously into the darkness. She walked to the well. At the rim, she forgot her fears and leaned over to watch the moonlight dancing on the water's surface. At that moment, Tommy cried out in a sourceless fear. His sudden yell frightened the woman so much that she pitched forward into the darkness of her own well.

You mention the name Harttman around Weaver's End and you meet with a lot of strange responses. Some folks say the old widow's ghost haunts the Harttman land, if only because of the groans emanating from the well on windy nights. Others blame it on natural causes. Aunt Ginny certainly believed, but I was never sure. All I know is that even seventy years later, after the old cottage was torn down and replaced with a brick bi-level, there still remains an overpowering aroma of apples around the untouched well.

TOO COLD?

The day was cold, not like other days.
This day was an exception. The iciness hovered over the woods like a vulture who hovers over its prey, just waiting to clutch with his claws the enticing morsel below.
But there was a feeling of warmth among the living as two squirrels jumped to and fro and chased each other in the snow.
They simply enjoyed each other.
Only the chattering of their teeth and an occasional shiver hinted that the cold even existed.
Suddenly they stopped, because they heard a distant train whistle.
Giving each other a glance, they quickly scampered in different directions.
The cold subsided for a time, and the two squirrels were snug in their nests.

Robert Dooley



I had built an intricate lake

I had built an intricate lake
and allowed a fine dust to settle into it

Casting about the water
feeling at the edges with a question
Splashing

The crazy birds
and the crazy venomous snakes
Chirping and hissing in the mornings —
they'll see us in the future

in the times when you can walk on my lake together

Brian Capouch

Friend

You always say the nicest things,
especially when they're needed.
You're always by my very side
no matter how you're treated.

You always show that friendly smile
whether the day is good or bad.
You're always there to sympathize
in times when I am sad.

And in those times of happiness
when my joy I want to share,
You're always waiting for me
to show me that you care.

Some say good friends are hard to find;
I find that quite untrue.
My search ended a long time ago
when I found a friend in you.

Debbie Brosseau

Winter Storm

The north wind twisted icicles
into dragon's teeth and scimitars,
and choked the sun,
and iced the wind chimes into silence.
After dark the snow began.
The northwest corner of the lot was swept clean
and the driveway buried.
A weary sun discovered trackless drifts
and a dumb world burdened with frost.
But then the birds came back —
first the upside down nuthatches, chipping warily in the
elm,
then snowbirds, whistling from the low bushes to the feeder,
and a gang of raucous starlings,
chittering sparrows,
a pair of chuckling cardinals.

John D. Groppe



“Jungle Prey”

Silent, stealthy steps
Barely breaking the jungle still
Stop. Then slim muscles tense;
Leopard regards her chosen kill.

Uncertain, the stalked gazelle
Surveys her cramped domain,
Listening, watching, waiting;
A wordless prayer she is saying.
Frightened, but not knowing why,
Comprehending she soon will die.
Instinct, careful, cautious, warns
In mind's own eye.

Tense, sleek body
Ready to spring —
Leopard makes her target
Her one reason for being.

Smooth, sun-bronzed statue, run!
You stand on danger's doorstep.
But the gazelle only steps nigh,
Muscles rippling under golden thigh,
Accepting what is to be
In a manner of calm certainty.
The jungle dark grows deeper still,
And still is the alert gazelle.

Fearless, free jungle steed
You bow your head, forlorn —
Run far, run wide, run fast, run deep —
'Twas for death were you born?
Brave gazelle now swiftly tears
From her perch, she dares
To seek escape from certain pain
Should Nature be she who cares.

Leaping, gamboling feline
Lithe, agile form, a sun's burnished ray,
Spotted with daubs of pitch ash,
Quickly steals after running prey.

One well-aimed pounce
Upon the tender, copper flesh,
Leopard's steel claws
Turn skin to mesh.
A carpet of warm, salty crimson
Envelopes the gazelle as a shroud;
Yet still the creature's great horned head
Is held high in an end so proud.

Leopard, famish conquered,
Delicately licking padded paws,
Preening, stretching, cleaning,
Pausing to catch your breath —
Oh, Leopard, tomorrow, by White Hunter's hand
You'll join your prey in death.

Kathie Leahy

That Flies By Day

The shaft whistled out of nowhere in the woods, through the leaves and through my jacket, penetrating the soft flesh below, long before I felt it. I touched the feathers and a sharp tinge of pain racked my frame. My mind raced, and I ran, stumbled, and all was black and still.

I picked up the arrowhead which had been lying between the rows as if it belonged there, and put it in my dusty pants pocket and later on the shelf with the rest.

B.C.

Les neiges d'antan

How dare man with his crystal hands
Aim a blow at the Universe?
Better to learn from the world's demands.

Splendid youths in their merry bands
Heft crested tankards with laughing curse.
How dare man with his crystal hands?

Harried hopes on the wave-kissed strands
Dash to disaster and sometimes worse.
Better to learn from the world's demands.

Slowly the form of the moving sands
Buries the clothing and rich man's purse.
How dare man with his crystal hands?

No one can win when the dicer stands
Ready to roll as your hopes disperse.
Better to learn from the world's demands.

Old men carry enduring brands
Left as a remnant of life adverse.
How dare man with his crystal hands?
Better to learn from the world's demands.

T. H.



V - A Formation

A flying wedge
Against a harvest moon,
The formation advances slowly
On a wrinkled sky, uttering
Battlecries which diffuse
And refract in the heavy
Air. Far below, the
Wind rustles envious
Corn stalks doomed
To die and be forgotten,
But this little band is
Free to roam limitlessly
Forever. They never die,
Only move on. The V is their
Victory over the earth and the
Sun, or two fingers for peace, or
Vita: Life in its most haggard and
Broken, desperate and powerful state.

B.C.